



## RUSI WA NEWSLETTER



Leeuwin Barracks:  
Riverside Road  
Department of Defence

East Fremantle  
WA 6160  
Email: [rusiwa.au@gmail.com](mailto:rusiwa.au@gmail.com)

Postal Address:  
C/ O Locked Bag 5001  
Department of Defence  
Locked Bag 5001  
Fremantle, WA, 6160

Website: [www.rusi.org.au](http://www.rusi.org.au)



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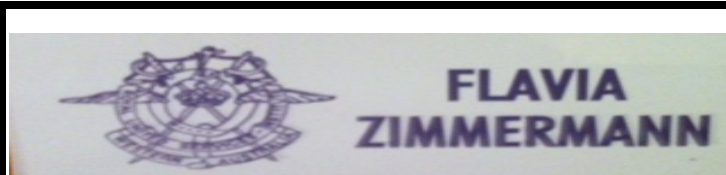
## **RUSI WA Upcoming Lecture – Mr L. Gordon Flake, CEO Perth USAsia Centre**

This Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> June at 7.30 pm Mr L. Gordon Flake Chief Executive Officer for the Perth US Asia Centre, that is located at the University of Western Australia, will be delivering a lecture in our Building 13, Leeuwin Barracks, East Fremantle headquarters entitled '**Antipodean Perspectives: How the world looks different from Washington DC and Perth**'. We would like to encourage all RUSI WA members to join this event and engage in the discussions that will follow.

## **RUSI Adelaide Sub Conference held on 24, 25 and 26 March 2015**

The Sub Conference in Adelaide was an event recently promoted by the Royal United Services Institute Adelaide Branch in partnership with SAGE International and Hargraves Institute. During these three days of intense debate, several vital aspects for future directions of the Australian defence capabilities and naval fleets have been raised. The discussion panels were comprised by key figures in the Australian national defence circles, politicians and academics. It was a thought provoking event where issues such as the future of the Sea 1000 project and its impact to the Australian Defence capabilities and shipbuilding industry were extensively argued. This forum of discussion has played a fundamental role to clarify myths and misconceptions in our Defence needs for the Australian public. It has been raised during discussions the importance of choosing a new submarine class that is suited for the Australian naval coast line and sea patrol needs. With the release of the latest Federal budget, a greater share of the national revenue has been allocated to defence expenditure. Nevertheless, the Sea 1000 options and the future of our fleets are still very much constrained by budgetary limitations. The choices that are will be made regarding the Sea 1000 project will produce a major impact to the future of the ADF and the safety of Australian shores.

For further information on the topics discussed during the RUSI Adelaide Sub Conference please follow the link <http://subsummit.com.au/about/>.



## **Purchase and orders of RUSI WA members name tags**

We would like to encourage all RUSI WA members to order name tags priced \$ 20 each either through our RUSI Office ( [rusiwa.au@gmail.com](mailto:rusiwa.au@gmail.com) ) on the night of our next lecture with Mr L. Gordon Flake on the 18<sup>th</sup> June 2015. Your support would be much appreciated.



**RUSI WA March Lecture  
'The Middle East in Flames'  
Delivered by Mr. Steve Lieblich**

On Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> March RUSI WA promoted a thought provoking lecture delivered by Mr. Steve Lieblich entitled **'THE MIDDLE EAST IN FLAMES'**. Mr Steve, son of Holocaust survivors, was born in Jaffa, Israel, and migrated to Western Australia during the 1950's.

Steve provided a comprehensive and fascinating account of the reasons underpinning the current political instability in the Middle East and the geopolitical implications for the region, particularly Israel. The lecture initiated with a brief background on the creation of the Jewish state and the Israeli struggle to preserve its borders. Israel, Steve explained, has never been fully accepted by its Arabic neighbouring countries and has, ever since, been exposed to threat from neighbouring Arab nations. It is valid to state that these region has been, ever since, an epicentre of political uncertainty and chaos. The Palestinian claims over the Gaza strip, supported by other Middle Eastern nations, represents a constant threat to Israel's very existence and struggle for self-determination in the region.

Furthermore, according to Steve, American president Barak Obama and his 2008 diplomatic tour to the Middle East gave rise to the 'Arabic spring'. This has triggered, therefore, a democratic wave that has ever since been challenging authoritarian secular regimes such as Hosni Mubarak's rule in Egypt. This political scenario allowed Islamist groups such as the Islamic Brotherhood to rise to power through using the democratic system. This being so, the Arab Spring has significantly increased political instability in a region already permeated by sectarian sentiment and political fragmentation. This has produced severe implications to the Israeli-Palestinian territorial dispute.

Finally, Steve explained that the Arab Spring destabilised former secular regimes such as Egypt, Libya and Iraq, thus, reshaping the balance of power in the region. He mentioned also that, after Operation Iraqi Freedom, an institutional vacuum was created, allowing Islamist networks to flourish in the country. This can be seen as one of the root causes for the civil unrest both in Syria and Iraq, which contributed to the formation of the Islamic State of Iraq and al Sham in the region. The growing threat of Islamism, sectarianism between Sunnis and Shiites, and political uncertainty in the Middle East places has the potential to throw the entire region into chaos.



**RUSI WA March Lecture**  
**'Snakes in the Jungle, Special Operations in War and Business'**  
**Delivered by Mr. Jim Truscott**

On Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> April RUSI WA promoted an engaging and rather interesting lecture delivered by Mr. Jim Truscott entitled '***Snakes in the Jungle, Special Operations in War and Business***', where a comprehensive account of his service for the Australian Department of Defence was presented. Jim also gave an overview of this book with the same title published by Zeus Publications (available on line at [www.zeus-publications.com](http://www.zeus-publications.com); [marketing@zeus-publications.com](mailto:marketing@zeus-publications.com) and [amazonbooks.com](http://amazonbooks.com)). This book is his memoir, and as a former Special Forces officer, he applies military skills developed during his years with the ADF into the world of business. This very interesting piece is a sales manual for those who wish to better understand the SAS and also have an interest for war issues in general and for the world of private enterprise.

Initially, Jim explained his experience with the Australian Defence force, during Kangaroo 95 exercises operations. This may be regarded as the largest combined military exercise ever held in Australian soil, comprising of military exercises between the Australian Defence Force (ADF), US, Papua New Guinea, Singapore, Britain, Malaysian and Indonesia. According to him, this exercise was potentially a 'waste of public money' since it failed to enhance the ADF'S defence capability and military posture in the region.

Also, the issue of psychological warfare was addressed as being an experiment used particularly during the Vietnam War. Ironically, The American and coalition forces have decided to apply such warfare technique to the military campaigns both in Afghanistan and Iraq. Jim mentioned also that American forces had appeared to learn from past strategic lessons from the Cold War period.

Furthermore, Jim explained in more detail how he has, in his book, translated former crisis management experience with counterterrorism, SAS operations and Defence strategy to the field of business and private enterprise. He gave an account of some unit operations that he served during his military career. Jim was a military engineer and was deployed for field operations in Rhodesia and Zimbabwe. Later in his military career, he became involved with counterterrorism operations and, also, joined the Australian SAS forces, one of his most fulfilling roles with the ADF and his greatest passion. During the late 80's Jim was part of the Australian mission in Papua New Guinea (PNG) during the time of the Bougainville Revolutionary Army insurrection. Jim mentioned also that Australian forces launched this military campaign with limited strategic planning.

Finally, Jim stated the current challenges to Australian national security and the future of the region. According to Jim, one of the greatest threats to the Australian Defence forces, government agencies and our national security would be the cyber warfare and the risks involved with the digital age. Thus, a brief account of the current challenges to world peace and international terrorism was raised. Jim explained brilliantly the 'modus operandi' of conventional warfare and unconventional warfare, and the risks and challenges presented by asymmetric unconventional wars, such as the wars in the Middle East.

Dear RUSI WA members,

It is with great delight that I inform that our latest issue was very well received by RUSI WA members. We have already received suggestions and comments that will certainly increase the level of discussion for future issues.

I would be grateful if all members could forward opinion pieces, academic articles or book reviews so that we can instigate greater debate around matters of defence and national security both in Western Australia and in the country. It would be fantastic if we could make our newsletter as democratic as possible.

Your opinion and contributions to the magazine are highly valued and will instigate further debate on defence issues and Australia's strategic posture in the region.

I hope you all enjoy our latest issue!

With kind regards,

Flavia Bellieni Zimmermann

Editor

## **Announcements:**

### **RUSI WA upcoming conference**

#### **1915: Western Australians at War and On the Home Front**



RUSI WA



#### **RUSI WA CONFERENCE:**

Together, the Royal United Services Institute of WA (RUSI WA) and Notre Dame University are hosting a one-day Military and Political History conference, titled 1915: Western Australians at War and On the Home Front. This significant event is open to members of the public.

One hundred years on from the Gallipoli campaign the events of 1915 continue to play a central role in the narratives of Australia, New Zealand and Turkey. The campaign continues to generate debate over strategy and planning and failures that resulted in the loss of over 140,000 allied casualties. Western Australians played a significant role in this campaign.

Some 417,000 Australians enlisted in the First World War from a nation of fewer than five million. By the end of the War more than 60,000 had been killed and 417,000 were wounded. These losses were to have a profound impact on the newly formed Federated nation. This year Australians will commemorate the Centenary of Gallipoli through a range of local and national events. This Military and Political History Conference will re-visit the aftermath of 1915 on Western Australians and War and on the Home Front and the conference will hear perspectives from an impressive group of speakers.

This is a “not to miss” conference in this centenary year. It is open to military historians, university and secondary students and members of the public.

The keynote speaker is the respected academic, Dr John Blaxland, ANU, Canberra who will speak on:

***REFLECTIONS ON THE LEGEND OF ANZAC: WHAT HAPPENED, WHAT IT MEANT THEN AND WHAT IT MEANS FOR US TODAY.***

**DATE:** Friday 26th June, 2015

**TICKETS:** [Conference Details & Booking at www.trybooking.com](http://www.trybooking.com)

**TIME:** 8.30am - 4.30pm

Prices includes morning and afternoon tea.

**REGISTRATION:** 8.00am

**SPEAKERS:**



**Dr John Blaxland, Senior Fellow (Keynote Speaker)**  
Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, Australian National University



**Associate Professor Deborah Gare**  
History at Notre Dame University



**Dr Shane Burke Senior Lecturer**  
*Archaeology & History at Notre Dame University*



**Dr Roger Lee**  
Head of the Australian Army History Unit.



**Dr Sue Gordon AM**  
Retired magistrate and ex-soldier



**Mr Neville Browning**  
Author



**John J Taylor**  
Architect and Author of *Between Duty and Design: The Architect Soldier Sir J.J. Talbot Hobbs*



**Captain Wayne Gardiner**  
2IC of the Army Museum of WA

**A detailed program is available at the RUSI national website**  
[https://www.rusi.org.au/states/wa/whats\\_on.php](https://www.rusi.org.au/states/wa/whats_on.php); and the Notre Dame University web site < <http://www.nd.edu.au/events/2015-freo/rusi/home> >.

Bookings can be made through the Trybooking web site  
<<http://www.trybooking.com/Booking/BookingEventSummary.aspx?eid=132113>>

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**CONTACT DETAILS:**

Louise Austen  
rusiwa.au@gmail.com  
ph: (08) 9311 2232

**CONFERENCE COORDINATORS:**

Dr Daniel Baldino (Notre Dame University)  
Colonel (Retd) Michael Brennan (RUSI WA)  
Ms Louise Austen (RUSI WA)



## **Australian Defence First Principles**

The Minister for Defence Hon Kevin Andrews has released on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015 the Australian Defence First Principles Review. This document was commissioned in August last year and lays out a strategic plan aiming to optimise our defence capabilities and resources, thus, meeting more effectively our national security needs.

It is valid to mention that since 1973 approximately 45 reviews have been produced on issues of defence, nevertheless, this latest review unifies them all in one single and comprehensive document. The First Principles Review was formed by an independent panel headed by David Peer, Rio Tinto's Chief Executive Officer, Robert Hill, former Defence Minister during the Howard government and Lindsay Tanner, former Labour Minister for finance. This review's main goal is to establish the best suited defence structure in the country so that the ADF will be able to accomplish its tasks more efficiently in a time of budgetary uncertainty, technological advancement and emerging military powers across the region.

The panel has found that many problems associated with clashing of defence guidelines and legislation in the Australian Commonwealth have its roots in the incongruent and confusing way that the Australian federative system operates. According to Greg Sheridan, the Australian federations 'suffers from a proliferation of structures, processes and systems, with unclear accountabilities, institutional waste, delayed decisions, duplication and flawed execution'.

Finally, the Defence First Principles Review indicated 76 recommendations, with the federal government comprising with 75 of them. It is claimed that the review will implement reforms that will axe approximately 1650 public jobs. The Defence department will secure its dual hierarchy having a chief of defence and a defence secretary, however, some civilian defence positions should cease from existing.

For further information on the Defence First Principles Review follow the link below

<http://www.defence.gov.au/publications/reviews/firstprinciples/Docs/FirstPrinciplesReview.pdf>

## **Australian Minister for Defence Hon. Kevin Andrew's speech at RUSI UK, Memorial Lecture London**

On 27<sup>th</sup> April Australian Minister for Defence Hon Kevin Andrews delivered an impressive speech at the RUSI UK London headquarters in celebration of the centenary anniversary of World War One and the Anzac's legacy. In this remarkable speech the Minister for Defence explained the similarity between antagonising political forces that lead to World War One and the challenges faced by policy makers in the contemporary world. Hon Kevin Andrews explained that the international arena is still permeated by contradictions and power struggle between nations and that strategic lessons from the past should never be ignored

Also, it has been mentioned in this speech that Gallipoli, a failed military campaign where many lives were sacrificed in the name of freedom and Western democratic values, is a landmark for the formation of an Australian national identity and the mateship culture. Finally, Hon Kevin Andrews also pin pointed crucial issues for the future of the ADF and national security such as the Australian-UK Defence relationship; the threat presented by Daesh and Islamism in the Middle East and in the world; the security challenges posed by the end of the 'Pax Americana' in the Asia Pacific, particularly with the rise of China; and, consequently, the need to reshape the Australian defence posture in Asia and in the Indo-Pacific.

For further information and to access the full version of this historical speech following link below:

<http://www.minister.defence.gov.au/2015/04/27/minister-for-defence-speech-annual-gallipoli-memorial-lecture/>

**Editorial**



**Editorial Comment - The Perth USAsia Centre**

The recent creation of the Perth USAsia centre, a non-partisan and non-profit organisation located in the University of Western Australia, highlights the growing strategic importance of Perth not only for the Australian Commonwealth but also for neighbouring countries in Asia. The city's geographic location and growing economic relevance with the iron ore and natural liquid gas exports will play a decisive role in the region for many years yet to come. Perth is also seen as a fundamental strategic city for American economic and diplomatic interests in the region. Furthermore, the strong defence and diplomatic ties between the United States and Australia are crucial elements for American relationship building in Asia and in the Indo-Pacific. Australia, a Western enclave in Asia, can operate as a mediator, thus, enabling cultural bridges between the West and other Asian nations. In a multipolar world, this is a fundamental issue for American foreign policy in the region, particularly with the rise of two major regional powers such as India and China.

Therefore, the Perth USAsia aims at instigating greater debate on geostrategic issues concerning Australia, the United States, and countries across Asia and the Indo-Pacific. It is

crucial to understand how power is being redistributed and new international alliances are emerging across the region. For this to be possible, the Perth USAsia centre promotes research in the field and through grants, scholarships and internships so that sound policy making can be developed. Also, the complexity and dynamism of diplomatic and trade relations in Asia and in the Indo-Pacific demand greater dialogue between American, Australian and Asian and Indo-Pacific institutions. One of the centre's main goals is, therefore, to develop research and analytic studies on issues that deal with Australian international politics and trade, Asian nations and the role that should be played by the United States in the region.

It is valid to mention that the new balance of power in Asia has captivated the international communities' attention during recent talks in the Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore. During the dialogue, America, China and Singapore stressed out current concerns on strategic, diplomatic and international security matters. Therefore, the Shangri-La Dialogue has brought to the international lime light the need to develop a better understanding of the power dynamics that is unfolding in the region. Thus, a Chinese rising power and the significant investment in military equipment and technology is currently a matter of concern for the future stability in Asia. Tensions between China and other neighbouring Asian nations may compromise diplomatic and trade relations across the region.

The historic rivalry between China and Japan and the disputed areas in the South China Sea are recurrent security problems in the region. With China increasing its military might, Japan is also increasing its military capabilities. It is valid to state that, Japan recently hosted the Mast Asia 2015, its first ever international defence conference and exhibition, sending signals to the international community that tensions between this country and China may be increasing. Thus, American Defence Secretary Ashton Carter speech in the Shangri-La dialogue heavily criticizes the Chinese military posture in Asia. Finally, another issue addressed during the dialogue was the growing threat presented by Jihadism in South East Asia and their ties of relationships with Islamic State operatives in both Syria and Iraq. If

stability and security are jeopardised in the Asia it will represent a major blow on trade and diplomatic relations not only regionally but also across the globe.

In a nutshell, this is only a brief account of the complexity and relevance of Asia and the Indo-Pacific for the international community. The work that is currently being produced and promoted by the Perth USAsia centre is of vital importance to better understand a complex, diverse, extremely dynamic and peculiar region. It will only be possible to build solid and lasting relationships with countries in Asia and in the Indo-Pacific if a greater dialogue, cross institutional and cultural work is developed between America, Australia and Asian nations. Thus, there is a pressing need to have a centre of excellence that produces sound research in this area, therefore, scrutinising the political forces that are currently operating in the region. The role played by the Perth USAsia centre is of crucial importance in such challenging times, and will most certainly assist in the development of sound strategic projections and policy making, thus, ensuring prosperity and stability for the entire region.

#### **The Editor**

***Letters to the Editor are welcome and will be published in our next issue.***

#### **References:**

MAST 2015 Review, available at

**Letters to the Editor – April 2015 issue**

The Editor

RUSI of WA Newsletter

Thank you for your excellent contribution in the March issue to the Submarine debate in Australia.

It would seem to me that the first issue that needs to be settled is: “do we need submarines in the RAN, and if so, what role do we need to have our submarines perform?”

My own considered view is: yes we definitely do need submarines, and we need them for the long term defence of Australia against the, admittedly low, possibility of a future military attack directed against Australia itself. We need them as a deterrent to such a threat, and, should that deterrent fail, and in the light of the fact that any such threat must needs be maritime in nature, as a key capability in our defence posture.

Any capability in our submarines beyond this, admittedly narrow, requirement is to move from the essential to the merely desirable. Given the very high cost of submarines, both to acquire and maintain, we surely need to focus on what is essential, and not be seduced into loading the submarine up with “desirable only” capabilities, at considerable additional cost.

Our submarines do not have to be better, in absolute terms, than other submarines in the region, only better in the narrow field of counter submarine operations, if we assess that enemy submarines could be part of a future military threat against Australia.

Submarines can perform a wide range of tasks, both in peace and war, and it doesn't require much imagination to dream up such tasks. Your Editorial, for example, makes mention of the very real threat of terrorism. However, just what use a sophisticated modern submarine might have in counter-terrorism operations, I fail to comprehend.

Finally, in a debate of this nature, the Government has a very real difficulty in being able to discuss in public the highly sensitive question of the intended role of our submarines. Thus, it is vitally important that the political leadership of Defence closely question and probe the advice given by its naval experts as to the capabilities required by our future submarines.

Yours sincerely,  
Norman Ashworth